



# PSYCHOLOGY WITH STYLE



Checklist Version (4/14/04 – Version 1.01)

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This checklist ([www.uwsp.edu/PSYCH/apa4bs.htm](http://www.uwsp.edu/PSYCH/apa4bs.htm)) is designed for use **after** studying the writing guide ([www.uwsp.edu/PSYCH/apa4b.htm](http://www.uwsp.edu/PSYCH/apa4b.htm)), upon which this is based. The checklist tries to summarize briefly (using as few words as possible) the main point in the corresponding outline item of the more detailed document. This checklist should also be useful for instructors using the writing guide when grading student papers.

## I. General Topics

### A. Typing:

1. Must be typed or printed on a computer.
2. Double space throughout.
3. Use 1 inch margins.
4. Use normal paragraphs (5 space indent) in body of manuscript.
5. Use 12 point font (10 characters/inch).
6. Single space after a sentence terminator.
7. Capitalize 1<sup>st</sup> letter following colon if clause is a complete sentence.
8. Text is left aligned (& not justified).
9. Do not hyphenate words at end of sentences.
10. Staple or clip manuscript.

### B. Writing in General

1. Must use complete sentences.
2. 1<sup>st</sup> sentence of a paragraph must be independent.
3. Avoid slang.
4. Do not use contractions.
5. Spell check & look up when necessary.
6. Proofread.

### C. Style Details in General

1. When in doubt, check *Publication Manual of APA*.
2. Write for submission to a scientific journal.
3. Model other APA journal articles.
4. Avoid using personal pronouns.
5. Avoid sexist language.
6. Avoid using empty words.
7. Past tense in the abstract/intro/method, present in results/discussion.
8. Try to read as if naive before handing in.

### D. Abbreviations

1. When abbreviating, spell out the first time.
2. Do not use too many abbreviations.
3. Latin abbreviations are used only in parenthetical material (except for et al.).
4. Do not use E & S as abbreviations for experimenter & subject.
5. Common abbreviations do not use periods.

E. **Numbers**

1. All measurement is metric.
2. 0–9 are spelled out (with exceptions). 10+ are written as numbers.
3. Capitalize nouns followed by numerals.
4. In abstract, use digits for all numbers (except when beginning a sentence).
5. Spell out any number when it is the 1st thing in a sentence.
6. Be consistent with number formats (e.g., decimals).

F. **Citations in the Text**

1. If you use someone's words/ideas, you must cite them.
2. There are numerous ways to formally cite.
3. First time reference is cited, spell out all authors.
4. If citation is in parentheses use ampersand for "and".
5. Multiple parenthetical citations are placed alphabetically.
6. Second hand citations should be clear.

G. **Quotations**

1. You must give page numbers for direct quotes.
2. 3-4 quotes in 10 page paper is upper limit.
3. Display quotation of >40 words as free-standing block.

II. **Research Reports** - order of sections is as follows:

A. **Title Page**

1. Format manuscript page header & page number.
2. Running head is <50 characters.
3. Title should summarize main idea in 10-12 words.
4. Format title, authors names & institutional affiliation.
5. Include In partial fulfillment of...

B. **Abstract**

1. Abstract is Page 2.
2. Format word Abstract.
3. Type as a single paragraph in block format.
4. Purpose is to provide a brief & comprehensive summary.
5. Should be accurate, self-contained, concise (<120 words), & specific.
6. Use digits for all numbers except when beginning a sentence.
7. Avoid citing references in abstract.
8. Paraphrase rather than quoting.
9. Use active rather than passive voice (but without personal pronouns).
10. Use past tense for procedures & present tense for results.
11. It is best to write this section last.

C. **Introduction**

1. Begins on Page 3.
2. Start by retyping the title. Do not type word Introduction.
3. Purpose is to tell the reader why study was performed.
4. Starts out broad & becomes specific.
5. Might include any hypotheses & rationale for them.
6. Final paragraph states explicitly why study was performed.
7. Contains a minimum of 4 paragraphs.

D. **Methods**

1. Format section & word *Method*.
2. Purpose is describe in detail how study was performed.
3. Make it sound professional, Assume submission to scientific journal.
4. Avoid unnecessary details. Similar to "empty word" problem.
5. Experiments divide methods into: subjects, apparatus, design, procedure.
6. Surveys do not include a design section.

**Subjects/Participants**

7. "Subjects" or "Participants" depending on animals or humans.
8. Format section & word.
9. Indicate who, how many, & how selected. With humans informed consent?
10. Include any relevant details.

**Apparatus**

11. Format section & word *Apparatus*.
12. Describe materials used & how functioned.
13. Must give model #, company, & state (as 2-letter abbreviation).
14. Must give dimensions (& perhaps other details).
15. Standard equipment (office equipment) is mentioned without details.
16. Do not describe procedures in this section.

**Design**

17. Format section & word *Design*.
18. Describe design & spell out (types & levels of) IVs & DVs.
19. Describe how subjects assigned to groups.
20. Describe any control procedures used.

**Procedure**

21. Format section & word *Procedure*.
22. Carefully summarize each step.
23. Indicate what a typical test, trial, or session involved.
24. Describe any phases or instructions given.
25. When referring to groups, use descriptive labels.

E. **Results**

1. Format section & word *Results*.
2. Write this section after creating tables/figures.
3. Briefly state main findings in words, then go into details.
4. Describe, then analyze.
5. Means are presented with 1 more digit of accuracy than raw data.
6. With nominal or ordinal data, give %s rather than frequencies.
7. General format of inferential statistic: *Statistic*(df) = value, *p* = value.
8. When possible, include some statistical estimate of effect size.
9. Emphasize meaning.
10. Do not "discuss".
11. Assume reader has working knowledge of statistics.
12. If subheadings employed, introduce & organize by meaning.
13. May need to address non significance.
14. Do not provide raw data, unless a single subject approach is required.
15. Avoid the word "prove".
16. Be careful with using wording that implies causality.

F. **Discussion**

1. Format section & word `Discussion`.
2. Purpose is to evaluate & interpret results.
3. Start off with a brief, non-technical summary of results.
4. Discuss the implications of the results.
5. Discuss how results relate to literature cited in introduction.
6. Could mention any limitations of study & suggestions for future.
7. Need concluding paragraph that summarizes conclusions drawn.
8. Should contain minimum of 3 paragraphs.

G. **References**

1. Start on a new page. Center word `References`.
2. Any citations made must be presented & vice versa (not a bibliography).
3. Tells the reader where they can find the citations.
4. Alphabetized by last name of first author.
5. Use hanging indent for each reference.
6. For each author, give the last name, first initial. middle initial.
7. Separate multiple authors with commas & last author with ampersand.
8. Year follows author (in parentheses & followed by a period).
9. Journal reference.
10. Book reference.

H. **Other Sections**

1. Includes: tables, figure captions, & figures. Each on a separate page.
2. Tables & figure captions have manuscript page header. Figures do not.
3. Tables & figures should be able to stand alone.
4. Data points should not be presented redundantly.
5. Tables & figures should contain lots of data.
6. Tables & figures may present other info besides results.
7. Table/figures must be introduced. Reader should also be told what to see.

**Tables**

8. Tables do not contain vertical lines.
9. Format of table number & title.
10. Recommend table feature of word processor for formatting.
11. When using columns with numbers, decimal points should line up.

**Figure Captions**

12. Start on a new page. Center `Figure Captions`.
13. Each figure caption is typed flush left in block format.
14. Word 'figure' & number are italicized.

**Figures**

15. 'Figures' are graphs, charts, drawings & pictures.
16. Figures (other than pictures) may be drawn in B&W only.
17. Each is centered on the page & takes up most of it.
18. Verbally label axes & provide a key if necessary.
19. Manuscript page header, figure #, & "TOP" go on back of figure in pencil.
20. Do not put figure caption on the figure.

III. **Research Reviews** - there are a number of kinds of research reviews.

A. **Introduction**

1. Begins on page 3 (after title page & abstract).  
Abstract should include topic/purpose, scope, sources & conclusions.
2. Retype title. Do not type word Introduction.
3. Should clearly define problem/issue, not unlike intro for research report.
4. It starts out broad & becomes more specific.
5. Introduce any subheadings. Organize them logically with emphasis on meaning.

B. **Body**

1. Sub/Heading formatting.
2. Should present relevant literature & ideas.
3. References will be listed in reference section & are cited.
4. Paper should be organized by idea/meaning rather than references.
5. Can be lengthy.
6. Might try to identify relations, contradictions, gaps, in literature.
7. Might suggest possible solutions to any problem(s) identified.
8. Might suggest future directions for research to take.

C. **Conclusions**

1. Summarize the main points made in the manuscript.

**Appendix 1** - Example Title Page

**Appendix 2** - Example Ways to Present Results

**Appendix 3** - Example Reference Section

**Appendix 4** - Example Table

**Appendix 5** - Example Figure Captions Page

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